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SOURCE

Chieh-fang Jih-pao.

FACTORIES CONSIDER WORK RESUMPTION

Shanghai -- Silk weavers and rubber manufacturers in Shanghai have been having considerable difficulty in keeping production going in the early months of 1950. Some of the firms allowed their workers to return to their rural homes, some on the basis of a set time period and others indefinitely. Some workers whose time limits are up are returning to the city to resume work.

There are 338 silk-weaving firms in Shanghai with a total of 5,540 looms. Of these, only 24 have resumed full operation, while 121 began partial operations in June. All others have been idle for some time. Thus only 1,623 looms are in actual operation. Total production for June was 17,550 bolts of silk. Twelve firms decided to resume limited operations during June. As for the other firms, the industrial associations and labor leaders are conducting talks to discover a formula for handling the situation.

It is likely that wages will be on a basis of 65 to 80 percent of the normal wage scale for workers. If work is carried on for less than 8 hours per day, there will be no deduction from wages on this account. Some factories will, by agreement, pay those actually working in the factories 70 percent of their former wages and pay the remaining 30 percent ss a subsidy to the workers sent to rural areas. Another factory has decided to leave its workers in rural areas for another 3 months allowing each worker a suspended work allowance of 108 parity units. If, at the end of the period, reopening of the factory is impossible, the factory may discharge the men and will be allowed to deduct the 3 month's allowance already given from the final separation pay as a concession to the needs of the factory.

During June, 65 of the 103 rubber goods factories in Shanghai were in operation. Most of these are operating on army supply contracts. Most of the suspended firms have a 6 months' work-suspension agreement with their worke s. Because July-September are slack months, the possibility for these firms to resume in the near future is not good.

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At a labor-capital mutual consultation meeting held on 19 July 1950, the labor representatives requested resumption of work. It was agreed that the employers should prepare written reports of the actual condition of their industries for consideration by the consultants' meeting. In cases where firms show real cause for not being able to resume operations, the labor union would undertake to persuade the workers to remain in suspended status.

If an industry is in special distress, the industrial associations will assume responsibility for gi 'ng aid. Further, if the industry is unable to pay the suspended work allowance and separation pay, it may discharge the workers at once. Workers who can return to rural homes will be given traveling expenses. Those who cannot leave the city will be referred to the unemployment relief agency.

In the case of the Hung-ta-i Company, the 333 workers asked the company to resume operations, agreeing to work for their food only. The company, however, could not operate successfully even without paying wages because its product, boots in this instance, can only be made to sell at above market prices. The negotiators have, therefore, persuaded the workers to remain 3 months more on suspended status, receiving 18 shih of grain as suspended status allowance.

Several other companies are unable to pay even the suspended status allowance. Their workers will be turned over to the unemployment agency for relief. A few firms with better foundations will resume work if they can earn enough to protect their capital. The leaders of the labor-capital mutual conference are now engaged in working out the practical details of work resumption for these firms.

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